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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/658,736	09/11/2000	James M. Zavislans	ML-0414DIV	3878
24902	7590	08/17/2006	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
KENNETH J. LUKACHER			EXAMINER	
SOUTH WINTON COURT			SMITH, RUTH S	
3136 WINTON ROAD SOUTH, SUITE 301			[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
ROCHESTER, NY 14623			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3737	

DATE MAILED: 08/17/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/658,736	ZAVISLAN, JAMES M.	
	Examiner Ruth S. Smith	Art Unit 3737	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 July 2006.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-8, 19, 21-23, 26-36 and 42-53 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 4, 5, 7, 21-23, 35, 36 and 51-53 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3, 6, 8, 19, 26-34 and 42-50 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ . |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>7/31/06</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

Claim Objections

Claims 2,46 are objected to because of the following informalities: In claims 2,46, the term "represents" is confusing. It appears that such a term should be deleted and replaced by "comprises". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

Claims 1-3,6,8,19,26-34,42-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The independent claims set forth structure as lying against skin tissue thereby including the tissue as part of the claimed invention. Inclusion of any part of a living being renders the claims non-statutory.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 49,50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dhawan. Dhawan discloses a system for examining tissue by maintaining the tissue under stress and examining the tissue under stress with a confocal imaging camera. The means for maintaining the tissue under stress includes a platen 54. The opening in the platen 54 includes a material window as part of element 44. The element 54 is positionable against tissue and it by itself does not apply a suctioning force. The images obtained are considered to be images "representing" optically formed sections of the tissue.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1,19,26,29-34,42-50 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-2,6,8-18 of U.S. Patent No. 6,937,886 in view of Zavislans et al (5,788,639). Zavislans et al disclose the use of movable optics in a confocal imaging system that allows one to change where the light is focused and therefore where the images are formed. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to have modified the claimed invention as set forth in 6,937,886 such that it includes movable optics for changing where the light is focused.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4,5,7,21-23,35,36,51-53 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed July 31, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The double patenting rejection remains in that 35 USC 103(c) cannot be relied on to overcome a double patenting rejection (see 37 CFR 1.78(c)). With respect to Dhawan, the images obtained are considered to be images "representing" optically formed sections of the tissue.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ruth S. Smith whose telephone number is 571-272-4745. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30 AM-4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Casler can be reached on 571-272-4956. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Ruth S. Smith
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3737

RSS